

## Public Safety & Drug Abuse

Goal 4: Support the county's ability to be safe and drug-free.

*Intended outcome: Reduce drug-use and put an end to drug-related deaths and addiction-related tragedies in the county*

### **Responsibility: Public Safety & Drug Abuse Action Team**

#### **Challenges that remain, following mid-term review:**

- Drug and substance abuse continue to negatively impact the quality of life, the quality of the workforce, and can hinder Crawford County's ability to attract new businesses and families to the area. Existing businesses also cannot expand their operations.
- Drug addiction is a family disease that has fractured many local families. Wrap-around services for caregivers, guardians, and support for children of addicts often cannot meet growing demand.
- Though the community has invested even more in public safety since 2010, demand sometimes exceeds capacity. In addition, officers' roles are shifting to include first-responder and social work duties, which can lead to burnout, and a decrease in qualified applicants for new officer positions.
- Drug treatment, recovery and mental health treatment resources continue to expand, but the demand continues to outweigh capacity.
- Existing drug and alcohol treatment options are out-patient only (non-residential), and not available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, which can affect individuals' willingness to seek, or stay committed to treatment.
- Emergency Crisis Intervention services, staffing and resources continue to fall short of demand, though significant improvement has been made since 2010.
- Drug abuse and substance abuse prevention, law enforcement, and recovery groups in the county collaborate, but are often understaffed, and under-funded—making sustainability difficult.
- Locally, many recognize the progress Crawford County has made in fighting drug abuse and addiction. However, negative news still outweighs the positive news; more efforts to balance that, and to change the perception of those living outside the area, are needed.
- There continues to be a lack of public awareness regarding available resources for substance abuse prevention and treatment, and mental health intervention.

### **Strategy 4.1: Serve as a neutral, community resource for all groups, agencies and support networks for addicts and families**

- Continue to bring all groups to the table—faith-based, medically-assisted treatment providers, schools, counseling agencies, volunteer support networks, etc-- to enhance collaboration and promote resource sharing. Groups currently engaged in these efforts include: ADAMH Board, MaryHaven, Community Counseling, Together We Hurt, Together We Heal and the Sycamore House, Alpha 12-Step and the Jericho House; G.R.A.C.E.; Crawford County school districts, local government officials, and several area churches. Invite speakers and presentations when appropriate.
- Serve as a catalyst to help these groups become more efficient and effective; support their volunteers and staff in whatever ways possible.
- Support events and initiatives that help promote prevention and recovery. Examples include (but are not limited to): Community Care March, Operation Street Smart, Night of Hope, Hope Over Heroin, Fed Up Rallies, DARE and Teen Institute programs, etc.

#### **Strategy 4.2 Engage the public in a countywide campaign against drugs.**

- Continue to increase awareness by educating the community and its leaders about the depth of the drug problem in Crawford County. Update presentations and educational/training programs to include emerging threats to our community (i.e. synthetics).
- Continue to update and distribute/share/post information--through channels like "Won't Happen to Me" ([www.wonthappen2me.org](http://www.wonthappen2me.org)) "What to Watch For" brochures, Community Resource handouts, etc.--that identifies existing resources, partnerships, and initiatives on prevention, treatment, and enforcement.
- Continue to collaborate with community organizations and employers to promote and encourage choosing recovery and second chances over addiction. Encourage the growth of programs that support addicts and their families and encourage recovery and rebuilding sustainable lives.
- Sponsor and promote programs and events that bring the community together to fight the stigma of addiction, show support to people in recovery and their families and take proactive approaches to educate Crawford County youth and their families about risks and prevention strategies. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Community Care March, Signs of Suicide (School prevention group), Digital Footprints (School anti-cyberbullying program), Teen Institute, Community Resource Officers, Operation HOPE, Hope over Heroin, First-Step Mentoring (PAARI), Crawford Works and The Leader in Me.
- Encourage new programs and awareness campaigns to take root.
- Combat area's negative news with positive news of success and recovery, while still promoting image of increased public safety and continual elimination of supply.

#### **Strategy 4.3: Concentrate investments on prevention and recovery.**

- Research, influence, and serve as a catalyst to expand prevention, treatment, and mental health resources.
- Investigate feasibility of establishing an in-patient detox and treatment facility in Crawford County. Work with existing substance abuse, mental health and addiction treatment and recovery programs in the area and compare to other communities nationwide. Include local health partners such as the health departments, hospitals, and clinics, to assess demand but also feasible solutions.
- Continue to work with the business community to improve workforce conditions that are brought about by substance abuse and addiction. Educate business leaders on their rights, the rights of their employees, the benefits of being Drug-Free Workplace compliant, and the benefits of having a good drug testing policy/procedure and adequate information on where to send employees for treatment when applicable.
- Support efforts that encourage employers to work with recovering addicts who are ready to make positive changes in their lives through education and/or training and sustainable job opportunities. Encourage the growth and improvement of local wrap-around services and coaches/mentors.
- Continue Partnership with Crawford County Health Partners on the Community Health Improvement Plan to increase safe and healthy choices, activities and events for area residents and their families.
  - Work with county schools to address Youth Substance Abuse (one of the Health plan's goals to address).
  - Connect with local agencies that help lower-income families as well as Early Childhood-focused programs to create more positive activities and programs for families of young children. Examples

include but not limited to: Families Children First Council, Help Me Grow, JFS, ADAMH Board, local churches, etc.).

#### **Strategy 4.4 Concentrate investments on enforcement and public safety**

- Support Law Enforcement:
  - Promote public showings of support for law enforcement officers; Continue to support local law enforcement by advocating for community watch programs, encouraging interaction of officers with local school-aged children, and promoting public safety efforts such as Operation HOPE (Heroin-Opiate Prevention Effort) and Operation Street Smart.
  - Continue to work with the schools and the DARE program, to foster positive relationships between young people in our community and law enforcement;
  - Continue to support existing levy campaigns which allow our jurisdictions to maintain workable staffing levels; and
  - Work with the State to provide additional local governmental funding, as cuts in these areas often result in cuts to public safety forces.
- Support/improve Juvenile Justice System:
  - Promote alternative means for dispute resolution such as Project Street Smart;
  - Coordinate efforts between our schools, law enforcement, children's services, the Juvenile Justice System, and our counseling agencies;
  - Work with the stakeholders listed above and the faith community to strengthen families--however defined--in the County;
  - Collaborate with stakeholders in reducing the number of days in which Crawford County's children are placed outside the home such as foster care;
  - Work with the Child Fatality Review Board to publicize recommendations; and
  - Increase mentorship opportunities.
- Support Mental Health professionals
  - Educate Crawford County on the prevalence of mental illness in our County with the goal in mind of providing earlier intervention;
  - Become a catalyst for the County to foster collaboration between the mental health, the developmentally disabled and criminal justice system-- especially when crimes are committed by those suffering mental health issues; and
  - Work to improve the referral system between the criminal justice system and the mental health providers.